

REMARKS BY ADMIRAL STANSFIELD TURNER, USN

BRYANT COLLEGE

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## I. Introduction

- Honored to be asked to share this day with you -  
graduates and your families
- You have reason to be proud -
  - ° made a commitment - stuck by it
  - ° worked hard to reach this day
  - ° today your efforts are being rewarded

## II. Greater Opportunity Today

- You are very fortunate to have gone to college in the  
mid-70's
  - ° In the late 60's and early 70's, young people,  
while justifiably acting to correct the social  
and political wrongs which they perceived, were  
also the victims of their own crusades. Parti-  
cipation became very black and white; you either  
were for their causes or against them; you  
couldn't be a moderate, somewhere in between,  
without seeming to cop-out. The pressure for a  
young person to choose sides was enormous. And  
the pressure to join the side against that amorphous  
mass known as "the government" was the greatest of  
all.

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- ° Yet, few things in life are all one way or all the other - as you well know. Governments are no more all-evil than human beings. And the American government has for 200 years displayed a marvelous resiliency which in the end always has had a way of making Americans proud to be Americans.
- ° In your college years, you have faced much less of that unnatural pressure and can take a more balanced view of life, of what is happening both nationally and internationally, and of the part your government is playing in the process.

### III. Government Service

- That you do take a keen interest in and conduct objective scrutiny of your government is critically important. It is the only way to stop excesses such as Watergate from ever recurring again. More than that, however, it is an exciting opportunity for each of you individually. The Government of the United States is the largest and most important public organization in the world. It has its flaws, but it has been tremendously successful in the last 201 years. With its future success is intertwined inextricably

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the freedom and the prosperity of the entire world around us. Most of all I can assure you from 31 years of experience that life in the Government of the United States is exciting. It was exciting to me 23 years ago when I first came to Washington as a very junior officer doing very subordinate tasks. That sense of excitement, of vitality, and of contribution is what has kept me in the employ of our government ever since.

- I can only urge that each of you today, tomorrow, or in the distant future--but at some time in your life--give thought to serving your government actively.

- ° I guarantee you will find it exciting.
- ° I guarantee that you will find it rewarding because if you have a talent that the government can use, you owe it to offer it for at least a part of your working life; in so offering you will be making a contribution to the continued strength of our country and all the wonderful things for which it stands.
- ° And with some envy I can tell you that if you think about government service today you will be one of many bright young people whom I see around the White House, the halls of Congress, the Pentagon, the CIA, and elsewhere. The place is teeming with people of your

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age and just a little older. And the opportunities for them are immense.

- But even if you do not find that it fits into your pattern to participate directly in the government, I urge you to recognize your responsibilities of being an informed and concerned citizen.
  - ° You must follow the activities of your government in the newspapers.
  - ° You must be aware of your Congressman's attitudes and voting records and stay in touch with what he is doing in representing you.
  - ° You must be willing to express your opinions and offer your advice in letters to your Congressman and to the heads of those agencies of the government that most affect or concern you - be it myself in the CIA, Dr. Schlesinger in the Energy Administration, Secretary Andrus in the Department of the Interior, or Secretary Vance at the Department of State - or others. I assure you that none of us feel we have all the answers. We are always looking for good ideas.

#### IV. Conclusion

- Whatever you do
  - ° get involved

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- don't be satisfied with caretaking -  
contribute part of yourself - your time,  
ideas, etc.
  - continue the educational process you have  
just begun here at Bryant.
- I wish you all success - in whatever terms you measure it -  
and a full, rewarding life.